



PETER A. ALLARD SCHOOL OF LAW

GRADUATE PROGRAM

THE DOCTORATE DEGREE (PHD)

The PhD in Law provides rigorous and advanced training for outstanding graduate students who have already obtained a Master of Laws (LLM) degree or its equivalent. It is a research-intensive degree, culminating in a dissertation that prepares graduates for opportunities in law teaching, legal research, policy development, public and governmental service, and the practice of law.

The information contained here is intended for guidance only; these guidelines are not an authoritative document. In the event of conflict with formal UBC policies, procedures, and regulations, the formal documents govern. Policies and procedures are revised regularly, and while every effort is made to keep these guidelines up-to-date, please refer to the various sources available through the [Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#), including [Current Students](#) and [Policies & Procedures](#).

Contents

A. Admissions	4
B. Faculty Supervisor and Supervisory Committee	4
C. Residency Requirement	5
D. Curriculum.....	5
1. Coursework	5
Grading Standards and Minimum Grading Requirements	6
2. Comprehensive Examination	6
Examination Committee	7
Timing	7
Examination Content	7
Reading Lists & Annotations	7
Comprehensive Examination Memo	8
Examination Format	8
Grading and Grades	9
3. Dissertation Proposal and Examination	10
Timing	10
Supervisory Committee	10
Dissertation Proposal	10
Formal Presentation & Discussion (Candidacy Examination).....	10
Advancement to Candidacy.....	11
4. Doctoral Dissertation	
Timing	13
Formatting Expectations	13
5. Final Doctoral Examination	13
Final Doctoral Examination Committee	13
Deadlines	14
External Examiner	14
University Examiners	15
Scheduling	15
Final Oral Defence.....	16
Approval and Final Submission.....	16
E. Graduation.....	16
F. Other	16
G. Timeline	17

A. Admissions

For information on admissions, please consult [Graduate Program Admission](#) under [Admissions](#) on the Allard School of Law website.

B. Faculty Supervisor and Supervisory Committee

All students are supervised through the stages of the PhD program by a faculty supervisor who is a full-time member of the Allard School of Law. The selection of a faculty supervisor begins in the admissions stage. No applicant will be admitted to the PhD program without a full-time faculty member agreeing to act as supervisor. Students will consult with their supervisors throughout the program of study.

Students will also be supervised by a supervisory committee, including the supervisor and at least two other faculty members. A supervisor and student may nominate committee members who are not full-time faculty members at UBC. These [nominations](#) are subject to the review and approval of the Allard School of Law Graduate Committee and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The Allard School of Law encourages students to include at least one member of the supervisory committee who works in a discipline other than Law. When the PhD was created, all committees were expected to have one member from a discipline other than Law. In 2007, Faculty Council relaxed this requirement with a resolution that indicated “a strong preference for one of those members to be from outside the Faculty.”¹

A student’s supervisory committee also forms the examination committee for the purposes of the comprehensive examination (discussed below). Although it is generally best if a student’s supervisory committee remains intact throughout the elements of the degree, the composition of the committee may change to reflect changing direction in a student’s research project. Most commonly, this change will occur after the comprehensive examination and before the dissertation proposal defence or candidacy exam (discussed below). It is normally the case that a student’s supervisory committee at the proposal defence or candidacy exam will be the committee that sees the student through to the completion of the dissertation.

The selection of faculty supervisors, including changes in supervision, must be reviewed by the Graduate Committee of the Allard School of Law, and is subject to approval by the Dean of the Allard School of Law and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Further information on PhD supervision may be found in the sections on [Program of Study](#) and [Supervision](#) in the Faculty of Graduate Studies Policies & Procedures webpages as well as in the Faculty of Graduate Studies guide to [Supervision & Advising](#).

¹ Faculty Council Resolution, September 18, 2007.

C. Residency Requirement

Graduate degree programs are more than simply a sum of the program requirements. Residency requirements reflect the importance of intellectual community and they help to ensure that students have every opportunity to become a part of the intellectual life of the institution. UBC sets a minimum residency requirement of two years for doctoral students, but the Law Faculty has modified that requirement by tying its residency requirement to a stage in the program—achieving candidacy.

Doctoral Student in Law Residency Requirement

Students in the PhD program are normally expected to be in residence until they achieve candidacy. Candidacy is achieved when a student has completed the required coursework, passed the comprehensive examination, and successfully defended a dissertation proposal. Students are expected to achieve candidacy during their second year of study. “Residency” is understood as being physically present in the Vancouver area and able to participate in classes, attend Faculty seminars and lectures, use the Law Library, and meet regularly with the supervisory committee.²

D. Curriculum

Following the pattern established for scholarly doctoral programs in North America, the PhD in Law at UBC consists of four distinct phases:

1. Coursework
2. Comprehensive Examinations
3. Dissertation Proposal & Examination
4. Dissertation & Final Examination

Students must complete all requirements for the PhD within six years of the date of first registering in the program. The expectations and requirements for each of these stages are outlined below.

1. Coursework

The coursework requirement for the PhD program consists of a one year, two-part seminar, which is to be completed in the first year of study:

LAW 610 Doctoral Seminar I: Issues in Legal Theory (4 credits)

This seminar provides students with a selective overview of major developments in legal theory over the twentieth century. The seminar is intended to provide grounding for further jurisprudential work by students in the course of their studies, including comprehensive examinations in the area of legal theory. Seminars will be based on discussion and analysis of

² Approved by Faculty Council September 20, 2012, and by the Dean of Graduate Studies, October 23, 2012.

assigned readings, which will include one or more monographs and/or selected shorter texts each week.

LAW 611 Doctoral Seminar II: Comparative and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Legal Theory
(4 credits)

This seminar will address issues of legal theory in interdisciplinary and comparative perspective. Discussion will focus on the applicability of legal concepts in different cultures and societies, and the consequences for the form and structure of law. In addition, discussion will address the applicability of concepts drawn from fields outside of law to legal research and scholarship.

Students may take additional courses in the Faculty of Law or other academic units as recommended or required by their supervisory committee.

Grading Standards and Minimum Grading Requirements

The Faculty of Graduate Studies sets minimum grading requirements for graduate students. For doctoral students registered in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, Fail (F) for individual courses is defined as below 68%. Students in the PhD program will be graded on the following scale:

Percentage (%)	Letter Grade
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
76-79	B+
72-75	B
68-71	B-
0-67	F (Fail)

For more complete information on performance expectations and other issues with regard to grading, please review the sections on [Academic Progress](#), [Grading Practices](#), and [Low Scholarship](#) on the Faculty of Graduate Studies Policies & Procedures webpage.

2. Comprehensive Examination

Each doctoral student must complete a comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination is intended to test a student's understanding of the chosen fields of study and his or her ability to communicate this understanding.

The Allard School of Law Graduate Committee must review and approve the comprehensive examination format and all changes to that format. The format may vary, but is subject to the requirements outlined below and of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, which can be found in the [Comprehensive Examination](#) section of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Policies & Procedures webpage.

Examination Committee

The comprehensive examination is set by an examination committee. In most instances, the examination committee will be the same as the student's supervisory committee, although a faculty member may join the examination committee in order to bring particular expertise for the purposes of the comprehensive examination but not remain on the supervisory committee.

The list of proposed members of the examination committee must be submitted for review and approval to the Allard School of Law Graduate Committee. The members of the examination committee will be the examiners and will be responsible for setting, administering, and marking the comprehensive examination in accordance with the following policies and procedures.

Timing

Students sit their comprehensive examination after completing the required coursework and before defending their dissertation proposal. The Graduate Program encourages students to complete their comprehensive examination with the first 12 months in the program, and not later than 16 months.

Examination Content

The contents of the examination will be determined by the examination committee, subject to the following requirements:

The comprehensive examination will consist of two written examinations in defined fields which do not significantly overlap and an oral examination covering both fields. The fields are required to test the student's knowledge of the scholarly literature in:

- a. a field of legal theory and/or associated methodologies; and
- b. a field of substantive law or procedure and the perspectives that define and critique the field.³

The fields may be developed out of the coursework completed by the student, but if so, while some overlap with course evaluation is acceptable, the comprehensive examinations should not simply replicate course material or evaluation.

Reading Lists & Annotations

The examination of the student in each field is ordinarily based on a reading list set by the examination committee in consultation with the student. The list in each field will consist of a minimum of 25-30 items (including a mix of books and scholarly articles). Multiple chapters from the same book (including edited volumes) are considered as one item. If other sources are listed, a brief rationale from the supervisory committee must be submitted.

³ Adopted by Faculty Council, March 24, 2011.

The student will ordinarily complete short annotations for each item on the reading lists, which he or she will circulate to the examination committee before sitting the written examinations. In addition, the student shall meet with his or her examination committee to discuss the reading list and general expectations pertaining to the examination before sitting the written examination.

Comprehensive Examination Memo

A student's supervisor will submit a proposal outlining the format of the comprehensive examination to the Allard School of Law Graduate Committee. A comprehensive examination template memo is available on the [Forms](#) page. The memo will contain the following elements:

- the composition of the Examination Committee;
- a list of the fields of examination with a short description of each field and the objectives of examination with regard to the field;
- the format of the written portions of the examination and an indication of the examiner responsible for setting each portion; and
- the dates and times at which the written and oral components of the examination will take place.

The supervisor should submit the memo to the Graduate Program at least two weeks before the first element of the comprehensive examination. The supervisor will attach the reading lists with annotations to the memo.

Examination Format

The comprehensive examination will normally consist of written and oral components.

Written Component

Students will write separate written components for each field. The written portions of the comprehensive examination will normally be open-book and the examination in each field may follow either a "take-home" or "in-class" format. With regard to any part of the examination that is "take-home," the period between the student's receipt of the examination question(s) and submission of the completed response(s) shall not be more than 72 hours or three days. With regard to any part of the examination that is "in-class," the period permitted for completing the examination shall generally not be more than eight hours. The expected content of each part of the examination shall reflect the chosen format. The responses to each part of the examination must be typed or handwritten.

Oral Examination

The examination committee will conduct an oral examination following the written portions of the examination. The oral examination is expected to last approximately two hours, although it may be shorter or longer as circumstances warrant. The oral examination will ordinarily occur not more than two weeks after the final written examination, and preferably within several days of the final written examination.

The oral examination will be chaired by a faculty member representing the Faculty of Law Graduate Committee or, if that is not possible, by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies of the Faculty of Law. If the oral examination is chaired by a faculty member who is not a member of the examination committee, then the duties of the chair are normally procedural and reporting only. It is the chair's responsibility to convene the meeting on the day of the oral examination, to oversee the process, and to report the results to the Graduate Committee, along with any comments the chair wishes to make for the benefit of the Graduate Committee.

The oral examination will ordinarily begin with a short presentation from the student describing his or her approach to the questions posed in the written component of the examination. This will be followed by one or two rounds of questions from the examiners and/or general discussion. Once the examining committee is satisfied that the student has had a full opportunity to demonstrate his or her knowledge of the material, the chair will excuse the student and the committee will deliberate about the result of the written and oral components of the examination.

Grading and Grades

While certain members of the examination committee may take particular responsibility for elements of the comprehensive examination (reflecting their particular expertise in a field), the comprehensive examination will be graded by all members of the examination committee. The written and oral portions of the examination will be considered together.

Examinations will be graded using the following scale and criteria:

Fail: A completed examination which fails to demonstrate a thorough and accurate knowledge of the literature relevant to the subject of the examination, as included within the lists approved by the Graduate Committee, shall receive a mark of "Fail." At the discretion of the Examination Committee, a student who receives a mark of Fail may be permitted to re-take the examination.

Pass: A completed examination which demonstrates a thorough and accurate knowledge of the literature relevant to the subject of the examination, as included within the lists approved by the Graduate Committee, shall receive a mark of "Pass." Thorough and accurate knowledge includes the ability to identify, synthesize and engage critically with key themes in the core literature.

If the examining committee decides that some re-examination is necessary, then the committee has broad discretion to determine the nature of the examination. It may involve re-sitting the entire examination, including written and oral portions. It may involve something less, such as re-sitting one of the written examinations or the oral examination after further reading.

3. Dissertation Proposal and Examination

The purpose of the dissertation proposal and examination is to establish that the planned course of dissertation research can reasonably be expected to lead to a dissertation that is an original work of research and analysis which makes a scholarly contribution to a field of law. Students are required to complete a written dissertation proposal of approximately 25-30 pages and to defend that proposal in an oral examination by the student's supervisory committee. On successful completion and defence of a dissertation proposal, a PhD student will become a PhD candidate.

Timing

PhD students are expected to complete the candidacy requirements within two years of first registering in the PhD program, and preferably within the first 16 months. The Faculty of Graduate Studies sets a limit of three years to advance to candidacy. Students not advancing to candidacy within three years will normally be withdrawn from the program. Extensions may be granted in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (see the section on [Advancement to Candidacy](#) under Policies & Procedures on the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies webpage).

Supervisory Committee

If a supervisory committee is to be reconfigured after the comprehensive examination, then it should happen before a student writes and defends his or her dissertation proposal. (See the discussion above under Faculty Supervisor and Supervisory Committee.)

Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal should be approximately 20-30 pages long and will typically contain the following elements:

- a. Introduction, including background, problem statement or research question, and contribution;
- b. Literature Review;
- c. Theoretical Framework and Methodology;
- d. Anticipated Challenges;
- e. Outline, including chapter titles and a brief description of basic content;
- f. Timeline;
- g. Bibliography.

Formal Presentation & Discussion (Candidacy Examination)

The dissertation proposal for examination should be circulated to the supervisory committee at least two weeks before the proposal examination. The full supervisory committee must normally be present for the formal presentation. The meeting will be chaired by a representative of the Allard School of Law Graduate Committee or the appointee by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies of the Allard School of Law.

The format of the proposal examination replicates that of the final dissertation examination. The student will spend a maximum of 10-15 minutes outlining the proposed dissertation. This will be followed by several rounds of questions from the committee members. The presentation and discussion should be approximately 2 hours in length.

Once the discussion is complete, the chair will ask the student to leave the room and the committee members will deliberate on the result. The committee has broad discretion to pass the student, to require additional written work, to require a supplemental oral examination, or to determine that a student does not advance to candidacy.

In order to fail a student without the possibility to revise the proposal and take a supplemental (second) proposal defence, all members of the supervisory committee must elect to do so. The supervisory committee has discretion to fail without an opportunity to revise and take a supplemental defence for a number of reasons ranging from but not limited to: failure to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the literature, failure to establish working hypothesis and develop feasible research methodology, lack of alternative approaches, lack of reasonable timeframe for the project completion, weak project justification, failure to propose novel empirical and/or theoretical contribution to its field, etc.

A student should take a supplementary (second) proposal defence within 6 months from the date of the first attempt to defend. The supervisory committee should provide the student with their comments in order to assist the student to revise the prospectus and prepare for the second defence. The supervisor and student should cooperate during this period in accordance with their memorandum of understanding which determines their duties and expectations, and in accordance with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies policy.

In order to fail a student a supplemental proposal defence a simple majority of the supervisory committee is sufficient.

The chair will keep a written record of the meeting, noting any concerns raised by the committee regarding the proposal and/or advice given to the student and recording either the committee's decision. The chair will also complete the Proposal Defence Memo which is available on the [Forms](#) page.

Advancement to Candidacy

If a student successfully defends his or her dissertation proposal (the candidacy examination), then the Allard School of Law Graduate Committee will recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies that the student advance to candidacy. The student should contact the Graduate Program office in order to complete the [Advancement to Candidacy form](#) which requires signatures from supervisor and student.

This form includes a student pledge in relation to academic honesty and ethical conduct to be signed by the student.

4. Doctoral Dissertation

The dissertation is to be a major and original book-length piece of work that makes a significant contribution to the student's chosen field of study. The Faculty of Graduate Studies description of the [Scope of a Doctoral Dissertation](#), found on the Faculty's website, is as follows:

A student's doctoral dissertation is a substantial piece of scholarly writing that contains a significant contribution of new knowledge to the field of study. It presents the results and an analysis of the student's original research, and should be significant enough to be published in the refereed literature.

The dissertation must be a coherent document that provides a complete and systematic account of the student's research. It may incorporate work from submitted, accepted or published journal articles, which may or may not have co-authors.

The dissertation should reflect the student's ability to do the following:

- critically analyze the relevant literature;
- use and describe in detail the appropriate methodology for the research undertaken;
- conduct research and present findings that result in a significant and original contribution to knowledge;
- verify knowledge claims and sources meticulously;
- locate the work of the dissertation and its findings within the broader field or discipline; and
- communicate the research and analysis effectively.

In most fields, a doctoral dissertation will range from 60,000 to 80,000 words in length, exclusive of footnotes, bibliography, and appendices. As a courtesy to examiners, if the dissertation will be over 100,000 words long the student must notify the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies when the Appointment of External Examiner for Doctoral Dissertation form is submitted.

In its [Instructions for the Preparation of the External Examiner's Report](#), the Faculty of Graduate Studies sets out a number of expectations for doctoral dissertations in terms of overall academic quality/merit. They provide additional guidelines on the scope of a doctoral dissertation:

A. The overall academic quality/merit of the dissertation.

Basic expectations of the dissertation include:

- the dissertation presents a contribution to knowledge
- the dissertation is likely to have an impact on the discipline
- the research undertaken is contextualized clearly and accurately references the larger field of knowledge on the topic;
- the structure of the dissertation is coherent and flows logically from chapter to chapter
- the methodology used is described in detail, relevant to the research question(s), and employed appropriately;

- the research results are reported fully and clearly;
- the analyses and conclusions drawn from the research are well-justified and integrated into the larger field of knowledge;
- the implications and limitations of the research are fully discussed;
- the writing of the document is of a professional standard.

Timing

It is expected that the research and writing involved in producing the PhD dissertation will take a minimum of 12-18 months. More time is commonly required. PhD candidates should work in close consultation with their supervisor and supervisory committee during this time, obtaining individual comments on draft chapters as they are completed and meeting periodically with the full committee.

Candidates are encouraged to consult the guidelines and resources for [Dissertation & Thesis Preparation](#) on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website, including the [Handbook of Graduate Supervision](#).

Formatting Expectations

Candidates are also encouraged to follow the specifications for presenting their dissertation from the outset of their writing, including [Formatting Requirements](#) and the specifications for the [Structure](#), found on the Faculty of Graduate studies website. Before the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will accept a dissertation for submission to an external examiner or for final submission, it must conform to these specifications.

5. Final Doctoral Examination

The last stage of the PhD program is the final doctoral examination, consisting of two parts: the external examination and the oral defence. This process is managed and overseen by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and governed by that Faculty's policies and procedures. Candidates should understand that it is a complex process requiring careful planning and attention. The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies advises students to acquaint themselves with the [Final Doctoral Exam](#) section of its website, including [Tools for Planning](#), [Doctoral Deadlines](#), and [Doctoral Exams FAQ](#), a year in advance of the time they are planning to defend their PhD dissertation.

For information purposes only, some of the main elements and procedures relating to the final doctoral examination are listed below. Students (and supervisors) must consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies website for full information on policies and procedures: please see the sections on [Examinations](#), [Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations](#) and the [Final Doctoral Examination](#), including the [Doctoral Exam Guide](#).

Final Doctoral Examination Committee

The membership of the examination committee must be approved by the Dean of the Faculty Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Normally, the examination committee consists of:

- the external examiner;
- two university examiners;
- two or three members of the candidate's supervisory committee, including the supervisor; and

- an examination chair, who is the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies or the Dean's designate.

Deadlines

In order to be eligible for program end dates and scheduled graduation ceremonies, students must meet five successive deadlines set by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies:

1. submission of the Nomination for External Examiner form to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies;
2. submission of doctoral dissertation for external examination;
3. nomination of University Examiners;
4. the final oral examination; and
5. acceptance of the final and approved doctoral dissertation by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The dates of these respective deadlines are published in the [Doctoral Deadlines](#) section of the [Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies website](#). It is the candidate's responsibility to be informed of and plan for these deadlines and to consult and communicate clearly with his or her supervisor in a timely manner regarding deadlines and planned completion dates. The Doctoral Exams Timeline Worksheet is a useful tool for planning the doctoral examination.

External Examiner

A student must submit his or her doctoral dissertations for assessment by an arm's length external examiner, chosen by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in consultation with the Allard School of Law. Supervisor and student should talk about possible external examiners and decide on several possible candidates. The supervisor should then complete the [Nomination for External Examiner form](#), indicating preferred external examiners, and submit the form to the Graduate Law Program. The Graduate Program will then submit the form to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The form needs to go to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral at least two months before the intended date of submission of the dissertation for external review. This allows Graduate Studies time to confirm the availability of an external examiner.

It is the candidate's responsibility to submit the dissertation for external examination to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in conformity with that Faculty's requirements. Please consult the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' website on [Submitting the Dissertation for External Examination](#).

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies will inform the candidate of the identity of the external examiner only after it has transmitted the dissertation for examination to the external examiner. The candidate must **not** under any circumstances have any contact with the external

examiner during the examination process. For full information, consult the section on the [External Examiner](#) in the [Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies Doctoral Exam Guide](#).

The external examiner's report must be received before the final doctoral examination can take place. If the external examiner's report is negative, the Dean or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies may consult with the examination committee chair, the candidate's supervisor, and/or others as appropriate to determine whether or not to proceed to the final oral defence.

If the decision is made not to proceed with the final oral defence, then the candidate will normally have an opportunity to revise and resubmit the dissertation. Once re-submitted, the dissertation will be sent out to the original external examiner and another external examiner. If either or both of the external examiners approve of the dissertation for defence, the candidate may proceed to the final oral defence; otherwise the dissertation is considered to have failed.

For full information, see the sections on the [External Examiner's Report](#) and the [Exam Overview](#) in the Faculty of Graduate Studies [Doctoral Exam Guide](#).

External examiners are not required to attend the final oral examination, but they may do so. The Faculty of Graduate Studies provides some funding to support travel costs of external examiners. If an external examiner is to be approached about attending the final oral defence, then that approach should come from someone other than the candidate.

University Examiners

The candidate and his or her supervisor are responsible for identifying University examiners and for submitting the [Approval of University Examiners for Doctoral Dissertation](#) form to the Graduate Program so that it can be delivered to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at least four weeks before the scheduled final doctoral examination.

Scheduling

Once the dissertation has been sent to the external examiner, a due date for the external report is set. The candidate and the supervisor will be informed of this date by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, as well as of the earliest possible date for the final oral defence. Generally speaking, the final oral defence will not be scheduled sooner than eight weeks after the submission of the dissertation to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for external examination. The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies does not schedule final oral defences in August, or from mid-December to mid-January.

It is the candidate's and/or supervisor's responsibility to arrange a mutually convenient time for the oral examination with the members of the examination committee, including the university examiners, and to book the exam with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

The quorum for an oral defence consists of the chair, two approved university examiners, and two members of the supervisory committee. Oral examinations must not be scheduled less than four weeks

in advance, and require the submission of a programme for the oral defence to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for the purposes of public posting.

For full information, see the sections on [Scheduling the Oral Defence](#) and [Examination Programme](#) in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies [Doctoral Exam Guide](#).

Final Oral Defence

The final oral defence generally lasts about 2½ hours. It is a public event. The candidate has a maximum of 30 minutes to present the dissertation. The presentation is followed by questions from the examination committee, beginning with the University examiners, the committee members, and finally the supervisor who poses the questions set by the external examiner. There are commonly two rounds of questions. The audience is then invited to ask questions. Once questioning is complete, the candidate and audience are asked to leave the room and the examination committee deliberate on the result. Finally, the candidate is asked to return and the Examination Chair announces the results of the examination.

For full information, consult the section on the [Oral Defence](#) in the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies [Doctoral Exam Guide](#).

Students are strongly encouraged to attend one or more final oral defences of students in the UBC Law PhD program before their own final oral defence of their dissertation.

Approval and Final Submission

The [Doctoral Dissertation Approval Form](#) must be signed by the supervisor and at least two other examination committee members and the completed form submitted by the student to the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The final approved copy of the dissertation must be submitted by the student to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, normally within one month of the date of the final oral defence. For full information about submitting the final version of the thesis to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, consult the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' webpages on [Final Dissertation & Thesis Submission](#).

E. Graduation

In order to graduate, candidates must apply to UBC Enrollment Services by the appropriate deadline. See the information on [Graduation](#) at the Student Services website.

F. Other

For other policy and procedure information, including information on:

- [Extension](#)
- [Withdrawal](#)
- [Readmission](#)
- [Reinstatement](#)

- [Vacation Policy](#)
- [Working while Studying](#)
- [Permission to Teach](#)
- [Scholarships, Awards & Funding](#)

please consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies' webpages on [Policies & Procedures](#), as well as the section for [Current Students](#).

Information about [On-Leave Status](#) can be found in the UBC Academic Calendar.

G. Timeline

Students must consult the detailed PhD program description above for full information on timing and deadlines.

Item (use hyperlinks for more information)	Time-line	Date of Completion
1. Coursework	Within 8 months of first registration	April, Year 1
Scholarship (Vanier, SSHRC, Trudeau) applications (annual)	September each year	September, annually
Formation of Examination Committee	8-10 months following first registration at latest	April, Year 1
Progress Reports (annual)	May annually	May, annually
Preparation for Comprehensive Examination Examination Content Reading Lists & Annotations		
Comprehensive Examination Written Component Oral Examination	3-6 months after completion of coursework	Summer/Fall, Year 2
Formation of Dissertation Supervisory Committee		Immediately following completion of comprehensive examinations, Year 2
Preparation of Dissertation Proposal	3-4 months after completion of comprehensive examinations	December, Year 2
Formal Presentation & Discussion (Candidacy Examination)	Within 15-18 months following first registration	December/January, Year 2 ⁴

4 The Allard School of Law expects students to complete candidacy within 2 years of first registration. Faculty of Graduate Postdoctoral Studies regulations require termination of PhD studies for students who have not advanced to candidacy within 3 years.

4. Doctoral Dissertation Preparation	12-18 months following advancement to candidacy	January-June, Year 3
Final Doctoral Examination	36-48 months following first registration	August, Year 3 – July, Year 4